

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Tuesday, October 16, 2001

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. KIRK).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
October 16, 2001.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MARK STEVEN KIRK to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1447. An act to improve aviation security, and for other purposes.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2001, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) for 5 minutes.

BORDER STATES EXPERIENCING STATE OF ECONOMIC EMERGENCY

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the towns and cities along the southern border with Mexico in our Nation. These areas are dying economically and need our assistance now.

In the wake of the events of September 11, this country has embarked upon unprecedented procedures to increase our domestic security, and those procedures are proper. We must have a new sense of preparedness; we must have a new sense of being on guard in this dangerous time of the 21st century.

But as we increase our security efforts, we have not taken the steps to address the effects on our economy and

on our quality of lives as we take those steps. Yes, we must be prepared and, yes, we have to take these security measures and, yes, we are going to have inconveniences that we have never experienced before, but let us think these out thoroughly and take the steps to increase our resources, if necessary, to make up for the problems caused by the increased security.

We have grounded, for example, much of general aviation around this country, causing incredible hardships on one sector of our economy. We can think that through and change that situation. We bailed out the airlines, but all of the businesses and the economy related to airline flight, whether travel agencies or rental cars or hotels, and all the people associated with staffing those areas have been laid off, those businesses are in trouble, and yet, this Congress has taken no steps to help them.

In an area where I know best because I represent the border district in San Diego, California, which borders with Mexico, towns and cities all along the Mexican border have taken a hit such as no other American community has taken because of the security measures. Yes, we have to protect our northern and southern borders from any infiltration by terrorists and, yes, we have to inspect all of the pedestrians and all the vehicles and all of the trucks that cross those borders, and we have to do it more thoroughly than we ever did before. But let us increase the resources to do it and not try to do it with fewer resources.

For example, at the biggest border crossing in the world between 2 nations in my district of San Ysidro, California, where between 50,000 and 100,000 people cross per day, the wait at the border because of the new security checks has gone from a half-hour to 4 hours, to 5 hours, to 7 hours, 8 hours or more. In fact, nobody knows how long the wait will be as they start off for jobs legally, for education legally, for cross-border cultural activities legally. Nobody knows how long it is going to take to cross that border, whether we are talking about San Ysidro and Otay Mesa and Tecate and Calexico, California; and Nogales, Naco and Douglas, Arizona; and Brownsville, Harlingen, San Benito, McAllen, Pharr, Edinburg, Roma, Zapata, Rio Grande City, and El Paso, Texas. These areas depend economically on cross border traffic, cross border legal traffic. Legal traffic. People who have the proper documents to work and shop in our Nation.

So businesses all along the border are suffering losses from 50 to 80 to 90 percent of their income. They are additional victims of September 11 and nobody seems to be worrying about them.

Yes, increase the border security. Assure all Americans that no terrorists are crossing. But let us increase the resources.

I have been told by the Director of the INS in San Diego that if she had 20 more inspectors per shift, that is 100 more positions in San Diego, which would cost roughly \$5 million or \$6 million, she can reduce the border wait from 6 hours to 20 minutes and assure us of the level 1 security that this country demands and our citizens want. We can do the security and we can keep a reasonable flow across that border if we give some resources to the INS and to the Customs Service.

I have asked the Governor of California, and my colleagues have asked the Governors of their border States, to declare a state of emergency to bring attention to this economic disaster area. We have asked the President of the United States to declare a national state of emergency. Let us get help now to the border communities. We can have security and economic activity at the same time.

PRIVATE-PUBLIC CONTROL OF AVIATION WORKFORCE WORKS BEST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, it seems that one of the continuing objections to the upcoming legislation that is dealing with aviation security is the whole question of the federalization of the employee workforce at the airport. I rise today in opposition to total airport workforce federalization, and I am here to convince my colleagues of the same. Mr. Speaker, in general, foreign governments provide an average of 10 to 15 percent of security personnel, while the private sector provides the remaining security personnel.

I would like to share my experience in coming up here on United Airlines. It was Monday afternoon and I had advanced through the ticket counter and the x-ray machine where both my carry-on and myself was inspected. The flight attendant and another employee of United Airlines politely detained me. It seems that a pair of trimming

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

scissors which I carry in a small manicure kit had been detected with the metal detector. They asked, of course, permission to open up my bag, which I gave them, and they asked me also to turn on my laptop computer. They proceeded to investigate my person, in the form of hand metal detection and a pat-down, and finally they permitted me to board but, of course, not before confiscating my trimming scissors. Throughout the few minutes that it took, the two employees were resolute, thorough and professional.

I understand on Wednesday, October 3, a bipartisan group of members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure met with top security officials at El-Al, Israel's state airline. This airline is widely considered to be the most secure in the world, and any of my colleagues who have flown it can probably attest to that fact. These experts emphasized that when they find a screener to be negligent, that individual is relieved of his or her job immediately. They will simply not stand for any incompetent employee to remain in place. In a proven example of public-private partnership, the Ben Gurion Airport Authority in Tel Aviv conducts training, establishes standards, and manages the overall effort, while a private company conducts the pre-board screening and other security functions.

Furthermore, in Europe, following a spate of terrorism, events that occurred in the 1970s and the 1980s, the aviation system exchanged their previously nationalized workforce to a private sector approach and workforce. In these European airports these privately contracted screeners are highly trained, paid, and retained. We can glean advice from these precedents: London Heathrow and Gatwick, Belfast, Rome, Athens, and Paris, and the aforementioned Tel Aviv.

Now, I know Federal employees can do the job. I have great respect for them. In fact, I am one myself. My father was an employee of the Federal Government for 35 years. The case, Mr. Speaker, is not against government employees, but for the private-public arrangement. It is a better model from all of the experience of other airports, and we should learn from them.

The solution also comes from the Transportation Secretary, Norman Mineta's aviation workforce proposal, which would combine the best of both the private and public sector worlds. It would institute Federal Government control and oversight, while retaining the flexibility and accountability inherent in the private sector. It would take steps to promote the function of baggage screening to a higher level of professionalism. Specifically, the administration's proposal would implement practices of more stringent hiring, training, and better pay and benefits. Moreover, screeners would work in

conjunction with law enforcement officers, including both local airport police and Federal marshals.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this is the answer to the real problem of security at our airports. Based upon a tradition of what works at other airports, I believe a private-public arrangement is the best solution. I hope my colleagues will support this approach.

Mr. Speaker, I will insert into the RECORD at this time a sheet distributed by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA), chairman of the Subcommittee on Aviation, entitled "Fact vs. Fiction: The Truth About Airline Security." It further summarizes the arguments for a public-private arrangement for effective airline security and has the statistics that bear out the argument that I have made.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC.

FACT VS. FICTION: THE TRUTH ABOUT AIRLINE SECURITY

DEAR COLLEAGUE: Let me provide you with the truth relating to effective airline security screening.

Fiction: We must create a new 27,000 Federal employee bureaucracy to model European success.

Fact: Most airports in Europe provide security through a coordinated effort of public sector oversight and supervision of private screening contractors. In general, foreign governments provide an average of 10 to 15 percent of security personnel, while the private sector provides the remaining 85-90 percent of security personnel.

Amsterdam: 2,000 private; 200-250 law enforcement.

Brussels: 700 private; 40 law enforcement.
Paris-Charles DeGaulle: 500-600 private; 100 police.

Paris-Orly: 350-400 private; 50 police.

Lyons: 150 private; 30 police.

Nice: 150-250 private, 20-30 police.

Frankfurt: 350 private; 500 federal, with plans to increase private participation.

Geneva: 250 contract, 250 government.

Stockholm: 200 private; 40 law enforcement.

Norway Oslo: 150 private; 20 law enforcement.

Helsinki: 150 contract; 20 law enforcement.
Berlin: 450 private; 60 law enforcement.

London Heathrow: 3,000 private contractors for screening; hundreds doing guard and perimeter security for the private British Airports authority; and 20 federal law enforcement.

London Gatwick: 1,500 private contractors doing screening; hundreds doing guard and perimeter security for private British Airports Authority; and 11 federal law enforcement.

Sincerely,

JOHN L. MICA,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Aviation.

BIPARTISANSHIP IN DANGER OF SHATTERING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, at a time when people are justifiably concerned about the spread of toxic agents in our mail system here on Capitol Hill, I personally have a greater fear that we are going to fall prey to an agent that I think, in its own way, is every bit as toxic. The bipartisanship and cooperative problem-solving that the President and our legislative leadership have talked about and that the American public needs, not just symbolically, but in a practical, hard-headed way, is in danger of being shattered.

□ 1245

Everybody here on Capitol Hill knows that, to date, the reality is not quite as bright as the rhetoric and the promise. Our desperate desire for unity and cooperation has temporarily obscured some deep divisions.

There were rocky times on several items in the aftermath of the tragedy on September 11, although it appeared as though the President's challenge was being met by the gentleman from Illinois (Speaker HASTERT) and the Democrats, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT).

A series of three events has the potential to deal a body blow to our fragile accord.

The first, unfortunately, has already occurred, with an unnecessary decision by the President and the Republican leadership to abandon a carefully crafted, bipartisan antiterrorist bill from the Committee on the Judiciary. They replaced it at the last minute, without consultation and without even the opportunity for amendment, and without Members on this Chamber floor knowing fully the implications of what they were voting on, and locked it into statute for years to come.

The second threat is brewing as we speak. The economic stimulus package which, without the President's steady hand and the leadership of the gentleman from Illinois (Speaker HASTERT), is going to turn into a grab bag of tax cuts that are to be charitable, wildly controversial, and extremely problematic in terms of affecting our economic recovery.

Here again, this is legislation that does not need to happen immediately. We can take our time and do it right in a cooperative and thoughtful fashion.

Last, and it is important and perhaps most frustrating, there is legislation that may be advanced that is designed to accentuate our differences on international trade, instead of enhancing bipartisan cooperation that is possible.

There is a little contest that is brewing between the legislation of the gentleman from California (Chairman THOMAS) and that of the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), differences that are significant but not insurmountable.